

ORGANIZATIONS COOPERATING IN FIRE PREVENTION

By Hugh Fleming, Jr., Washington

Considering the difficulty in reaching top executives at their headquarters during the month of August, work on gaining effective support in fire prevention from the selected organizations is close to the planned schedule.

Through the initiative and zeal of Region 9, the Wisconsin American Legion has enacted excellent forest fire prevention resolutions which their delegates in turn will offer to the national convention the latter part of September in New York. Region 9 has completed the ground work for similar resolutions at the Michigan, Minnesota and Missouri state conventions to be held shortly. The work of the Washington Office has been handicapped by the extended absence in Europe of Colonel John Taylor, National Chairman of the Legion's Legislative Committee. Before his departure he arranged for the consideration of forest fire prevention resolutions at several state conventions in the West. He will return to the States in plenty of time to engineer the proper resolutions through the national convention. Following this meeting our real work starts in helping to make the American Legion effective in forest fire prevention and suppression on a new and higher plane.

The American Red Cross has advised all its national and regional officers of the necessity for forest fire prevention education. The national headquarters has ordered 40,000 Flagg posters for national distribution and is taking under advisement a permanent forest fire prevention educational campaign.

The parochial school system of the Catholic Church has given its unqualified support. A fire prevention talk was given before teachers from all over the country a few weeks ago at the National Catholic University, and, with the approval of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, a nationally known botanist, Father O'Neal, is collaborating with the Forest Service in the preparation of text matter to be distributed through the Catholic school system. Many parochial school superintendents have ordered Flagg posters for classrooms.

At the request of Rotary Clubs International, specially prepared forest fire prevention material has been furnished for distribution to its 4,000 odd clubs. What action will follow will be governed by the reactions on the part of the individual clubs and follow up by the Regions.

Unlike the Rotary International, the Kiwanis insists that such programs originate from its clubs. This being the case, it was decided to urge Mr. Leavitt in Region 9 to continue the excellent work he has already accomplished with the Kiwanis Clubs of Wisconsin and Michigan until the interest he has aroused is felt in the national headquarters.

To make forest fire prevention a national issue with the League of Women Voters, the ground work has already been started in the State of Wisconsin organization. The League of Women Voters is accustomed to devote at least one year to the careful study of any proposed resolution - so before we can expect any concerted national work on the part of the League, it is probable that a period of at least two years will elapse. It is an organization that when it does understand and approve a measure will devote tireless effort in putting it across.

Because so few of its national officers were in New York this summer, Boy Scout officials advised the Washington Office not to bring the forest fire prevention program to their attention until after Labor Day. A tentative educational program to submit at a Fall meeting of their officers is now being prepared.

Necessity for work with countless other organizations is not being overlooked and will be taken up shortly.